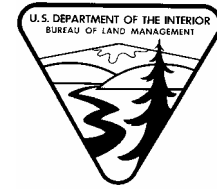




BLM News



Date: September 15, 2003

For Immediate Release

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BLM schedules public information meetings on Las Vegas Valley Disposal EIS

LAS VEGAS – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Las Vegas Field Office, is hosting three public scoping meetings for the Las Vegas Valley Disposal Boundary Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The disposal boundary was created by the 1998 Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) and modified by the 2002 Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act. The BLM is identifying available lands in the Las Vegas Valley that are appropriate for auction and preparing an EIS to assess the potential environmental impacts resulting from the sale of these lands.

BLM intends to prepare a comprehensive EIS with the specific purpose to authorize transfer of title disposal actions or other uses of public land in the Las Vegas Valley. The project area consists of all lands currently identified for disposal within the Las Vegas Valley, including the Las Vegas Valley disposal area, the Valley West Disposal area and other legislatively authorized disposal areas. The EIS will fulfill the needs and obligations set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and BLM management policies.

The Clark County lands act, potentially adds 22,000 acres of land for sale by the BLM to the highest bidder at public auction. BLM must study the land for potential impacts prior to any sale of the additional acreage. Shortly after approval of the Clark County lands act, Public Law 107-282, the BLM experienced a rapid increase in the requests for public land disposal. The new law significantly increased the amount of land available for disposal in the Las Vegas Valley. This created an immediate need to augment the impact analysis, especially the cumulative impact analysis contained in the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan, signed October 5, 1998.

Completion of this EIS effort will ensure the intent of Congress as portrayed in the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act is met by providing land for organized local community development. “The BLM will work collaboratively with all interested publics,”

stated Mark Morse, BLM Las Vegas Field Office, manager. “The public scoping process will help identify issues and concerns based on the potential build-out of the Las Vegas Valley as well as other potential uses of lands within the valley.”

A public participation plan should be completed within the next week, which will outline a comprehensive approach to reaching all interested parties, said Morse. “We plan to reach as many of the interested public as possible, to hear their concerns,” Morse continued. “We look forward to working with the public on this major Federal action.”

The time line for completion of this major EIS is one year, scheduled for issuance of a Record of Decision in August 2004. “This is an extremely compressed schedule for the complexity of this undertaking,” stressed Jeff Steinmetz, BLM Project Manager.

A number of local and state government agencies are being offered cooperating agency status towards the completion of this major study.

The scoping meetings provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the project and to share any concerns or comments they may have. Additionally, the public may submit information and identify issues that are addressed during the EIS process. The scoping meetings are scheduled from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the following locations:

September 30, 2003

Leisure Center
101 Pavilion Center Drive
Las Vegas

October 1, 2003

BLM Las Vegas Field Office
4701 North Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas

October 2, 2003

Convention Center
200 South Water Street.
Henderson

The meetings are an open house format to allow the public to visit with BLM representatives. A brief slide presentation is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. at each meeting.

For additional information please contact Jeff Steinmetz, BLM Project Manager at 702-515-5097.